

(5) The staff shall pay due regard to the constitutional separation of powers between the Senate and the executive branch. It therefore has a responsibility to help the committee bring to bear an independent, objective judgment of proposals by the executive branch and when appropriate to originate sound proposals of its own. At the same time, the staff shall avoid impinging upon the day-to-day conduct of foreign affairs.

(6) In those instances when committee action requires the expression of minority views, the staff shall assist the minority as fully as the majority to the end that all points of view may be fully considered by members of the committee and of the Senate. The staff shall bear in mind that under our constitutional system it is the responsibility of the elected members of the Senate to determine legislative issues in the light of as full and fair a presentation of the facts as the staff may be able to obtain.

(b) *Personal Representatives of the Member (PRM).*—Each Senator on the committee shall be authorized to designate one personal staff member as the member's personal representative of the member and designee to the committee (PRM) that shall be deemed to have the same rights, duties, and responsibilities as members of the staff of the Committee on Foreign Relations where specifically provided for in these rules.

(c) *Restrictions.*—

(1) The staff shall regard its relationship to the committee as a privileged one, in the nature of the relationship of a lawyer to a client. In order to protect this relationship and the mutual confidence which must prevail if the committee-staff relationship is to be a satisfactory and fruitful one, the following criteria shall apply, unless staff has consulted with and obtained, as appropriate, the approval of the Senate Ethics Committee and advance permission from the staff director (or the minority staff director in the case of minority staff):

(A) members of the staff shall not be identified with any special interest group in the field of foreign relations or allow their names to be used by any such group; and

(B) members of the staff shall not accept public speaking engagements or write for publication in the field of foreign relations.

(2) The staff shall not discuss their private conversations with members of the committee without specific advance permission from the Senator or Senators concerned.

(3) The staff shall not discuss with anyone the proceedings of the committee in closed session or reveal information conveyed or discussed in such a session unless that person would have been permitted to attend the session itself or is a member or staff of a relevant committee or executive branch agency and possesses an appropriate security clearance, or unless such communication is specifically authorized by the staff director or minority staff director. Unauthorized disclosure of information from a closed session or of classified information shall be cause for immediate dismissal and may, in certain cases, be grounds for criminal prosecution.

RULE 15—STATUS AND AMENDMENT OF RULES

(a) *Status.*—In addition to the foregoing, the Committee on Foreign Relations is governed by the Standing Rules of the Senate, which shall take precedence in the event of a clear inconsistency. In addition, the jurisdiction and responsibilities of the committee with respect to certain matters, as well as the timing and procedure for their consideration in committee, may be governed by statute.

(b) *Amendment.*—These rules may be modified, amended, or repealed by a majority of the committee, provided that a notice in writing (including by electronic mail) of the

proposed change has been given to each member at least 72 hours prior to the meeting at which action thereon is to be taken. However, rules of the committee which are based upon Senate rules may not be superseded by committee vote alone.

THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, 108 years ago on April 24, 1915, Ottoman Turkey began the systematic killing and deportation of Armenian intellectuals and community leaders in Constantinople. Between 1915 and 1923, an estimated 1-and-a-half million Armenians fell victim to one of history's most ruthless and notorious genocides. Most who survived eventually emigrated to different parts of the world, forming a widespread diaspora. The American people have a proud history of recognizing and condemning the Armenian genocide and have provided relief and a new home to many of the Armenians, Greeks, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Syrians, Arameans, Maronites, and other Christians who survived this campaign of mass extermination. Today, Armenian Americans are a vital part of the cultural fabric of the United States.

As we commemorate this dark period, I would encourage my colleagues to remember that atrocities like the Armenian genocide are almost never spontaneous events. They typically follow a period of human rights violations, discrimination, and violence against specific groups who often share a racial, ethnic, religious, or social identity. Most recently, we have seen this in the Chinese Communist Party's inhumane treatment of ethnic minorities, including the persecution of Uyghurs, Tibetans, and Mongolians and dissenters in Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, and further abroad. Our foreign policy should recognize this, fight denialism of past and current crimes, and emphasize the preservation of human rights rather than relying on eleventh hour action that comes far too late for vulnerable populations.

On behalf of all Tennesseans, I offer this solemn recognition of the Armenian genocide and ask my colleagues to join me in pledging to fight the forces of evil still causing so much pain and suffering around the globe.

FAITH MONTH

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Madam President, Americans across the country, led by Concerned Women for America, the Nation's largest public policy organization for women, and other faith-based organizations continue to celebrate April as Faith Month. I commend this noble effort calling all people of faith to join in prayer, thanksgiving, and celebration of their faith.

The United States of America was born of the unanimous Declaration that we are "endowed by [our] Creator with certain unalienable Rights," based on "the Laws of Nature and of

Nature's God," "appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world," and acknowledging our "reliance on the protection of divine Providence." We are a people of faith, which is why religious freedom is known as America's first freedom, as laid out in the Establishment and the Free Exercise Clauses of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The freedom of speech is guaranteed by the First Amendment and also supports America's unique focus on freedom of expression, including in matters of faith.

America's Judeo-Christian founding promotes religious diversity and tolerance. Our motto, "In God We Trust," further emphasizes the importance of faith in our Nation's founding. From our first President to the last, we have always acknowledged America's faith. President George Washington recognized "it is the duty of all Nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor."

Preserving our religious freedom, which strengthens our country's appreciation of all peoples, regardless of faith, requires eternal diligence. Sadly, attacks on religious liberty and people of faith are growing, with some religious charities forced to betray the tenets of their faith in order to participate in certain government programs. We must actively reject all efforts to criminalize or cancel religious beliefs as somehow incompatible with our democracy.

Religious organizations in America have a rich history of charitable engagement by helping the sick, poor, and afflicted. Their presence in my State of Mississippi following devastating and fatal tornadoes in March has been a blessing to those trying to rebuild their lives. Their service demonstrates why these organizations should be celebrated, not maligned, for their contributions to improve life. According to the Pew Research Center, more than 75 percent of Americans practice some type of religious faith. This rich, diverse religious heritage is to our credit and should be encouraged.

This Faith Month, I join millions of Americans in honoring the right to practice our faith freely and openly, with public displays and celebrations, including prayer and expressions of thanksgiving. In this manner, we reaffirm our commitment to the religious liberty principles of our founding.

TRIBUTE TO ALAN KOHLER

Mr. WARNER. Madam President, I rise today in recognition of the retirement of Alan Kohler.

Alan leaves the FBI as Assistant Director of the Counterintelligence Division, a challenging post he has held since 2020. Over his long and impressive career with the FBI, Alan has continuously worked on our most pressing national security issues. It is a career that has truly lived up to the FBI's